Demographic Procedures Used to Draw Election District Boundaries

City of Santa Clara

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Agenda

Districting criteria used by demographers

Relevant demographic data for the City as a whole

Computer mapping data ("layers") used when drawing election districts

Questions?

Districting Criteria used by Demographers

- **Population Equality – Census 2010 data**

- **Federal Voting Rights Act**

- **State Elections Code**

- **Other criteria**

Required Districting Criteria: Population Equality

- **Census 2010 population data must be used in districting** (until 2020 Census data are available)

- **New election districts must be nearly equal in total population:**

  - No more than 10% total deviation (based on ideal population size)

  - Santa Clara's Census 2010 population was 116,468. Each of two City Council districts must contain approximately half of this total (about 58,234 residents)

    - Difference between most- and least-populous districts should not exceed 5,823 (this is called "total deviation")

Required Districting Criteria: Federal Voting Rights Act

- Election districts should provide members of protected groups the opportunity to elect representatives of their choice (or possibly to influence the election of representatives of their choice)

  - Supreme Court decisions (Shaw v. Reno and others) say race cannot be the "predominant" factor in redistricting, unless there is a "compelling state interest."

  - Supreme Court decision (Evenwel et al. *v*. Abbott, Governor of Texas, et al., 2016) affirmed that *total* population is to be used to balance election districts.

Traditional Districting Criteria

District lines may be drawn that consider:

- **Topography (e.g., rivers, natural barriers)**

- **Geography (e.g., municipal boundaries)**

- **Cohesiveness, contiguity, integrity, & compactness of territory**

- **"Communities of interest," which may be:**

  - **Geographic communities (e.g., neighborhoods)**

  - **Socioeconomic groups (e.g., Federal Voting Rights Act protected groups, etc.)**

Further Criteria Emphasized by Courts

- **Respect boundaries of existing political subdivisions, when possible (e.g. voting precincts, etc.)**

- **Respect existing census geography (e.g., city blocks)**

- **Avoid head-to-head contests between incumbents**

- **Other criteria which may address unique local concerns**

In addition, when drawing boundaries, we try to use major roads and other identifiable features as boundaries

# Demographic measures used in districting (City of Santa Clara totals)

Federal race/ethnic category	Population (all ages)*	VAP (Voting Age Population - aged 18+)*	CVAP (Citizen Voting Age Population - persons eligible to vote)**
Hispanic or Latino	22,589	15,718	10,640
Not Hispanic or Latino:			
NH Asian	43,531	34,122	18,364
NH White	42,026	36,341	33,632
NH Black or African American	2,929	2,283	1,970
NH All others	5,393	3,230	2,981
Total Population	116,468	91,694	66,711

* Data from 2010 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File

** Estimates from the 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5 year estimates; Voting Age Population by Citizenship and Race (CVAP)

We use these demographic measures for Census blocks to build election districts. Blocks are the smallest Census geography with population counts.

Computer Mapping (GIS) Data ("layers") used by Demographers

- **U.S. Census 2010 blocks** (building blocks for election districts—Census Bureau population data are for these geographical units)

- **Santa Clara County precincts** (used by Registrar of Voters to implement districting plan)

- **GIS layers from the City's Public Data Portal**
  - **Streets, parcels…**

- **GIS layers from the U.S. Census Bureau**
  - **railroads, water features, landmarks…**

- **Santa Clara Unified School District attendance area boundaries**
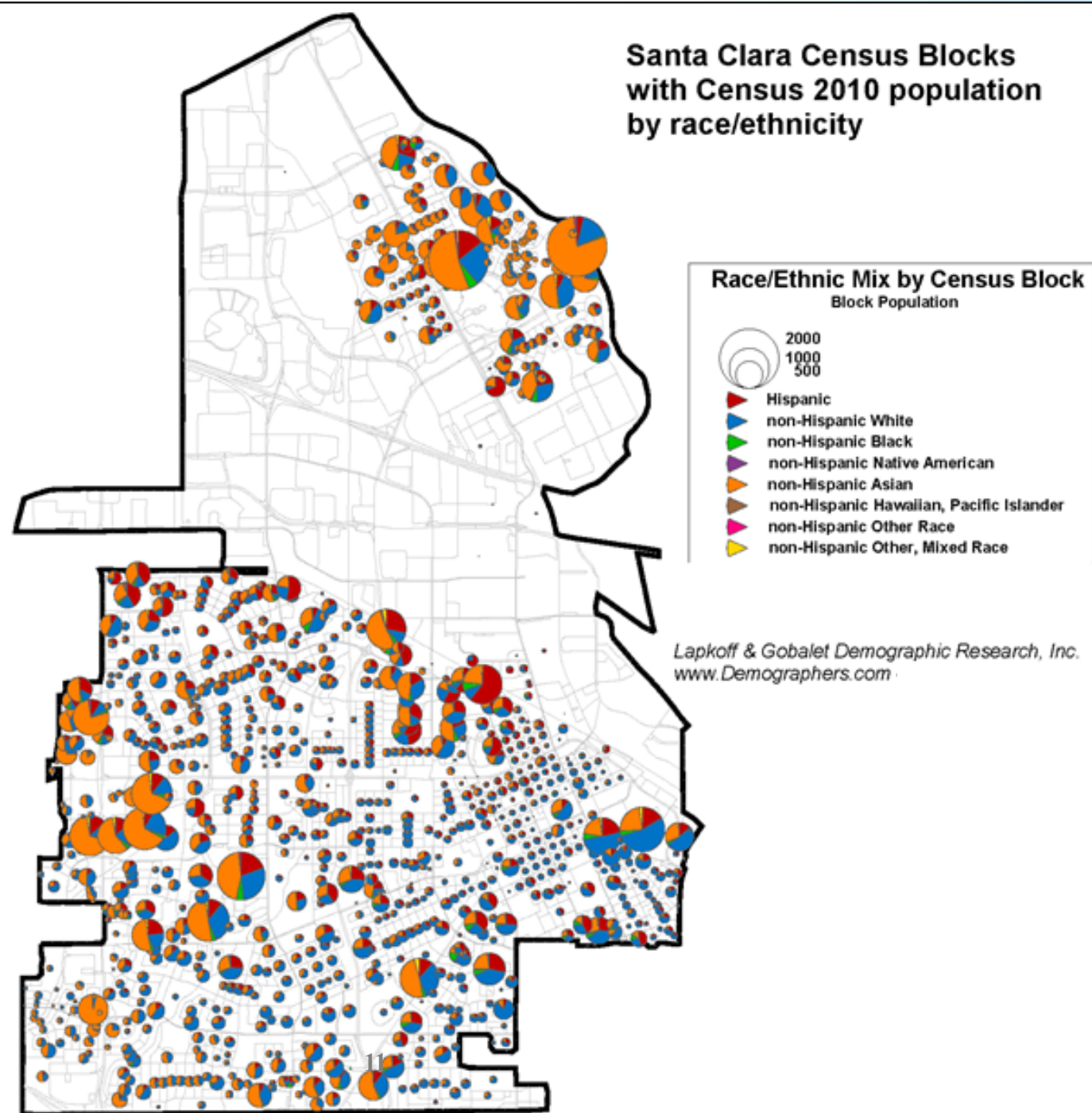
Census 2010 distribution of the City's population (by Census block)
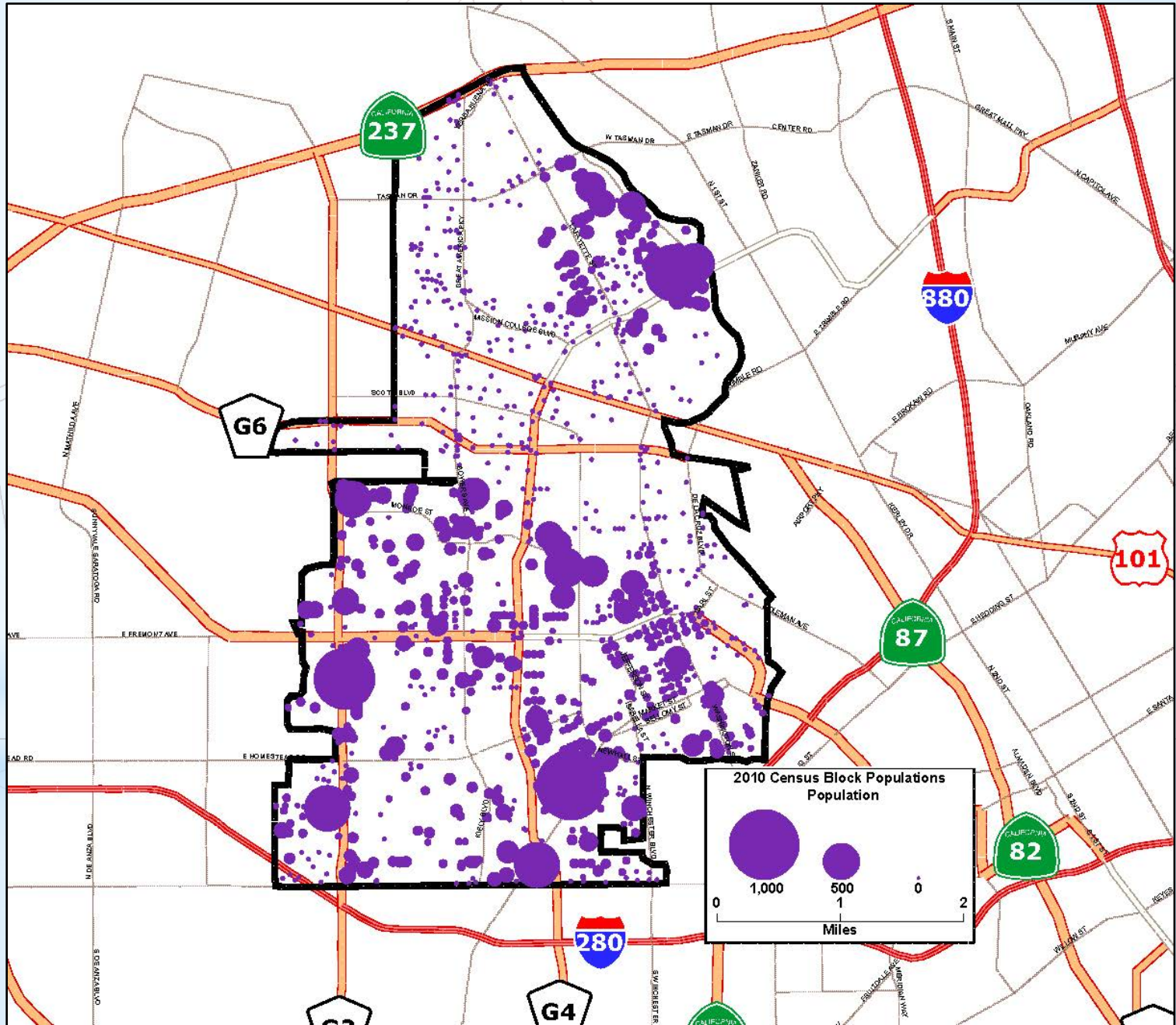
Census 2010 distribution of the City's population by race/ethnicity (by Census block)
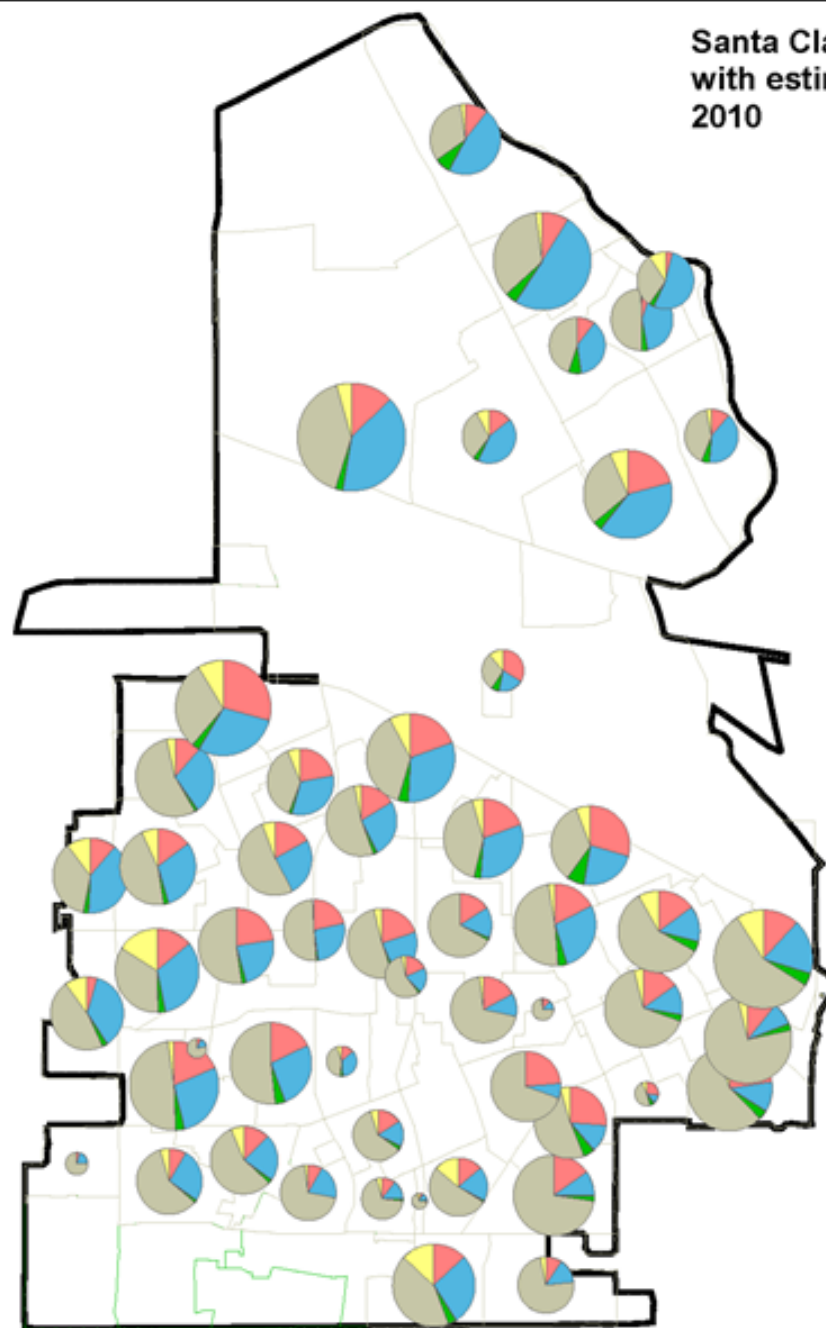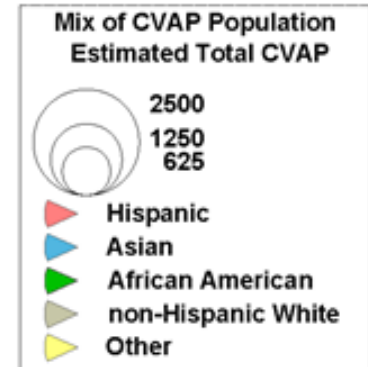
Data from the U.S. Census 2010 Redistricting Data Release (PL94-171)

Santa Clara Census Blocks with Census 2010 population by race/ethnicity

Race/Ethnic Mix by Census Block
Block Population

2000
1000
500

- Hispanic
- non-Hispanic White
- non-Hispanic Black
- non-Hispanic Native American
- non-Hispanic Asian
- non-Hispanic Hawaiian, Pacific Islander
- non-Hispanic Other Race
- non-Hispanic Other, Mixed Race

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Estimated CVAP (Citizen Voting Age Population) by Election Precinct

CVAP rates were derived from a special tabulation of American Community Survey 2005-09 data by the U.S. Census Bureau and applied to Census 2010 voting age population (VAP) totals, by race/ethnicity.

Santa Clara Precincts with estimated CVAP shares 2010

Mix of CVAP Population
Estimated Total CVAP

2500
1250
625

Hispanic
Asian
African American
non-Hispanic White
Other

Registered Voter mix, by type of surname

Santa Clara Precincts
with November 2010 Registered Voters
by Surname (Spanish, Asian, Others)

Surname mix of voters

1,500
750
375

▶ Spanish surname
▶ Asian surname
▶ Other surnames

Data and surname identifications from the California Statewide Database: http://statewidedatabase.org/
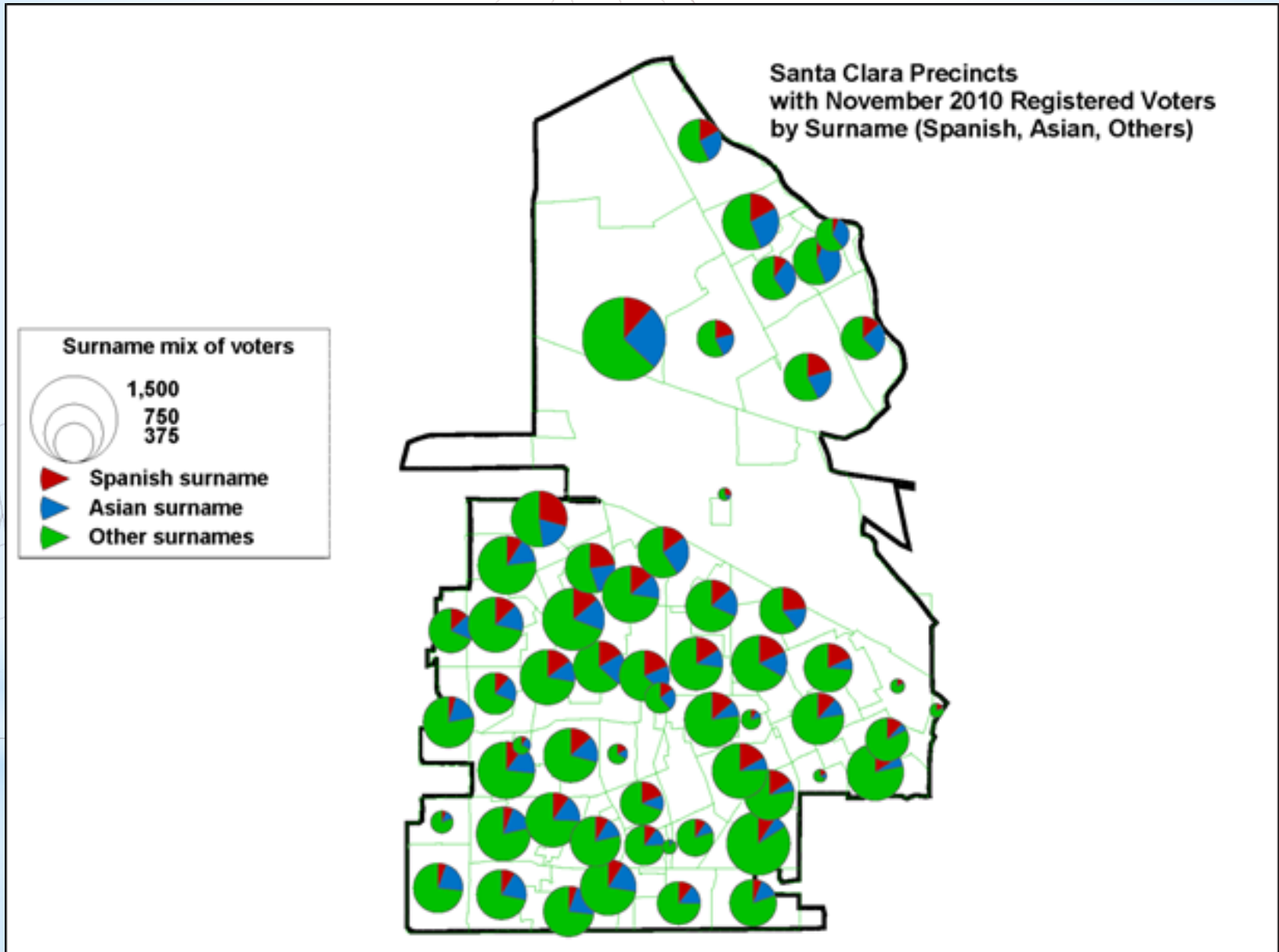
Comments /Questions?

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